The Ford/Sterling House, constructed in the 1850's, is a significant two-story, three bay, Italianate-style dwelling located near the commercial heart of Leonardtown, Maryland. While an important example of the Italianate-style in Leonardtown, the house also has important associations with a county judge and possibly with a pair of local contractors.

In 1848 John Baltzell purchased a 1 3/4 acre tract in Leonardtown from Ann Carpenter. Baltzell, a native of Frederick County, Maryland, presumably purchased the lot for his daughter Ellen M. Baltzell and her husband Judge Robert Ford. While Judge Ford was apparently living on the lot as early as the 1840's, the architectural evidence found in the Ford/Sterling house as well as other nearby dwellings suggests a later construction date. Eldon (SM-338), for instance, constructed in 1867, features nearly identical exterior details, massing, fenestration, floor plan, stair newel, and stair brackets. Eldon was built for Robert C. Combs and his wife Ruth E. (Ford) Combs (the daughter of Judge Robert and Ellen Ford) by Thomas C. Greenwell and George Horne. Because of the exterior and interior similarities between the two dwellings it is plausible that the two were built by the same builder.

In 1885, the heirs of Judge Robert Ford sold the property to Margaret Ellen Boyd who then transferred the property to J. Parran Crane and Mollie D. Crane in 1891. In 1911, the Cranes sold the house to Lynwood J. and Ruth E. Sterling who constructed a significant addition to the house. Because of their growing family, the Sterling's built a Queen-Anne style turret as

Capsule Summary SM-343 Ford/Sterling House Leonardtown Private (Page 2)

well as a rear kitchen ell on the north side of the dwelling. According to oral tradition, the addition was styled after the Sterling's old home on the Eastern Shore. The three sided, two story, turret featured a steep four sided roof covered with pressed-tin shingles. This design also has precursors in Leonardtown such as the c. 1899 W.W. Sawyer House (SM-365). At present, the Ford/Sterling house remains under the Sterling family ownership.

SM-343, Ford/Sterling House

St. Mary's County

Maryland Comprehensive State Historic Preservation Data

<u>Historic Context</u> Geographic Organization:

Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period:

Agricultural-Industrial Transition, 1815-1870

Historic Period Theme:

Architecture

Resource Type Category:

Buildng

Historic Environment:

Town

Historic Function and Use:

Dwelling

Known Design Source:

None

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF

Survey	No.	SM-343
Magi No	٥.	

DOE __yes __no

1. Nam	le (indicate pre	eferred name)		
historic For	rd House			
and/or common	Sterling House (pref.)		
2. Loca	ation			
street & number	· 22770 Washington Stree	t (new numbering sy	stem) _	not for publication
city, town Lec	onardtown	vicinity of	congressional district	3
state Maryland		county St	. Mary's	TM 133, P 476
3. Clas	sification			
Category district _X_ building(s) structure site object	Ownership public private both Public Acquisition in process being considered x not applicable	Status X occupied unoccupied work in progress AccessibleX yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park X private residence religious Scientific transportation other:
4. Own	er of Proper	ty (give names and	l mailing addresse	s of <u>all</u> owners)
name Mary T.	Sterling, et al			
street & number	PO Box 203		telephone n	o.: 301–475–2447
city, town Leo	onardtown	state a	nd zip code Md 20	0650
5. Loca	ation of Lega	al Descriptio	n	
courthouse, regi	stry of deeds, etc. St.	Mary's County Courthouse		liber EWA 980
street & number				folio 244
city, town	Leonardtown		state M	aryland
6. Rep	resentation	in Existing	Historical Surv	eys
title Sterli	ng House			
date Septem	ber 1980		federalX stat	e <u>X</u> county <u>X</u> local
pository for su	urvey records Maryland Hi	istorical Trust.		
city, town	rownsville		state M	aryland

7.	Des	crip	tion
	DC3	VI IP	

Survey No. SM-343

Condition Check one _X excellent deteriorated unaltered good ruins altered fair unexposed	Check one original site moved date of move
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Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Contributing Resource Count: 1

The Sterling House is located on the east side of Washington Street approximately 0.2 miles south of the intersection of Washington Street and Route 5 in the heart of Leonardtown's historic and commercial center. The dwelling is oriented on a east/west axis and is situated on a steep easterly sloping 1.3 acre parcel. The east slope has been diminished by a series of two grassy terraces. The house is bounded on the west by Washington Street, on the south by the Wesley Chapel (SM-530), on the east by a wooded tract, and to the north by a vacant wooded town lot.

The Sterling house, constructed c. 1850s, is a two story, three bay, Italianate-style dwelling with a side-passage, double-pile plan and a c. 1910s two story addition. The original section of the dwelling rests on a five-to-one common bond brick foundation while the addition is situated on a seven-to-one common bond brick foundation. The frame walls are sheathed with aluminum siding. The wide projecting eaves feature an enclosed cornice. The hipped roof over the main section is sheathed with raised-seam metal, while the roof of the turret addition is composed of decorative pressed metal shingles and raised-seam metal. The roof is pierced by two interior brick chimneys that each contain raised or projecting panels much like those found at Greenbriar (SM-211) and Eldon (SM-338).

The primary or west elevation consists of the original two-story, three bay section and the c. 1910s, three sided, two-story turret. The original section is pierced by two, nine-over-six, double-hung sash windows--each window featuring a pair of louvered shutters--and a pair of panelled French or swinging doors with a single light transom overhead. The first floor of the original section is entirely shaded by a wrap around porch supported by a series of square columns that feature bands of trim near their tops to indicate capitals. The second floor features three, six-over-six windows with each window exhibiting a pair of louvered shutters. On the first and second floor, the c. 1910s turret features three sides with each side containing a one-over-one window. The roof of the turret is covered with pressed metal shingles and the peak exhibits a finial.

The south elevation of the original section is pierced on the first floor by two, six-over-six windows. The porch wraps around the southwest corner of the dwelling to shade these two openings. The second floor is pierced by three, six-over-six windows. This elevation also features a c. 1910 two-story, shed roof (similar to the roofs found on so called "flounder houses" in urban areas such as Georgetown and Annapolis, Maryland) addition that extends beyond the rear of the house. This addition features a six-over-six window on the first floor and a six-over-six window and two-over-two window on the second floor.

The east elevation features the rear sides of the original section and the 1910s additions. The original section is pierced by a paired set of six-over-six windows and a six panel door on the first floor. These bays are shaded by a porch with square columns with the identical use of trim to indicate capitals. Three, six-over-six windows pierce the second floor. Between the original section and the projecting addition is a door on the first floor that leads to the rear porch and a two-over-two window on the second floor. The projecting addition features a six-pane-over-three-panel door that permits access to the basement. This door is protected by a projecting eave

8.	Si	gn	ifi	ca	nce

Survey No. SM-343

1400- 1500-	-1599 agriculture -1699 _X_ architecture -1799 art -1899 commerce		law literature military music	science sculpture social/ humanitarlan
Specific	dates	Builder/Architect		
check:	Applicable Criteria: x A and/or Applicable Exception: Level of Significance:	A _B _C _D _1		
Prepare support	both a summary paragraph (of significance and	a general statement	of history and

The Ford/Sterling House, constructed in the 1850s, is a significant Italianate-style dwelling located near the commercial heart of Leonardtown, Maryland. While an important example of the Italianate-style in Leonardtown, the house also has important associations with a county judge and possibly with a pair of local contractors.

In 1848 John Baltzell purchased a 1 3/4 acre tract in Leonardtown from Ann Carpenter. Baltzell, a native of Frederick County, Maryland, presumably purchased the lot for his daughter Ellen M. Baltzell and her husband Judge Robert Ford. Interestingly, Judge Ford is listed as already living on the lot when Baltzell bought the town lot. While this points to a c. 1840s construction date, the architectural evidence found in the Ford/Sterling house suggests a later date. First, the Italianate-style did not emerge in St. Mary's County until, at the earliest, the 1850s. Second, a very similar house, Eldon (SM-338) was not constructed until 1867. Eldon features a nearly identical floor plan, stair newel, and stair brackets. The mantles at the Ford/Sterling House, however, feature a squatty, rectilinear, and more severe appearance than the mantles at Eldon thus pointing to a pre-Civil War construction date.

Interestingly, Eldon was built for Robert C. Combs and his wife Ruth E. (Ford) Combs (the daughter of Judge Robert and Ellen Ford) by Thomas C. Greenwell and George Horne. Because of the exterior and interior similarities between the two dwellings it seems plausible that the two were built by the same builder. The familial and architectural ties between these two buildings need to be more closely investigated.

Judge Robert and Ellen Ford had three children Ruth E., J. Frank, and P. Frances. The prominent status of the Ford family is confirmed by the activities of at least two of their children. As previously mentioned Ruth E. Ford married a prominent local lawyer Robert C. Combs and J. Frank Ford eventually became the St. Mary's County Clerk of the Circuit Court. In 1885, the heirs of Judge Robert Ford sold the property to Margaret Ellen Boyd for \$1000. Margaret and Thomas Boyd then sold the property to J. Parran Crane and Mollie D. Crane in 1891. In 1911, the Cranes sold the house to Lynwood J. and Ruth E. Sterling.

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. G	eograpi	nical Data			-
	nominated property name Leonardto		rences	Quadrangle scale 1:24 000	
A	asting	Northing	B Zone	Easting Northing	
C			D F H		
	ndary description deed description	n and justification			
List all stat state	tes and counties	for properties over	county	county boundaries code	
state		code	county	code	-
11. F	orm Pre	pared By			
name/title	Kirk E. Ranzet	ta, Historic Sites Su	rveyor		
organization	St. Mary's Coun	ty Planning and Zonin	g	date April 1997	
street & num	be r 22740 Washi	ngton Street		telephone 301–475–4662	
city or town	Leonardtown			state Maryland	

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to:

Maryland Historical Trust

Shaw House 21 State Circle

Annapolis Maryland 21401

(301) 269-2438

100 COMMUNITY FLAC CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032--514-7600 SM-343, Sterling House St. Mary's County 7.1 Description

supported by a pair of brackets. A six-over-six window with a modern planter box over it pierces the first floor.

The north elevation consists of two simultaneously constructed sections, separated by a slight jog in the wall. The eastern section of this elevation is pierced by two, six-over-six windows. A six-over-six window located between the two floors provides light to a rear service stair. The second floor is pierced by two, six-over-six windows. The western section is pierced by two elongated two-over-two windows on the first floor and three, smaller sized two-over-two windows on the second floor.

The interior of the original section features a double-pile, side-passage plan. The stair passage features an open string stair with a squatty-shaped turned newel, rounded balusters, and scroll sawn stair brackets. From the stair passage, both the front and rear parlors can be entered via a six panel door surrounded by an architrave. The parlors are separated by a pair of pocket-sliding doors that are panelled. Each of the parlors feature a mantle decorated with a pair of squatty, square-shaped, engaged columns that support a plain fascia frieze and a shelf. The rear parlor mantle also features a semicircular opening for the firebox. This opening's edge is decorated with a grapevine motif. The ceilings on the first floor are twelve feet high. The stair passage also permits entry into the c. 1910s addition. The northwest corner room served as the dining room and still contains the family table that could serve at least twenty people. The door and window surrounds of this room and the other rooms in the addition feature corner blocks and reeded trim. To the east of the dining room is space that leads to the rear kitchen ell. The kitchen ell features a pantry and food preparation area. This section of the house is sheathed with diagonally placed beaded matchstick and features an enclosed service stair. The second floor of the house was inaccessible at the time of the visit.

SM-343, Ford/Sterling House

St. Mary's County 8.1 Significance

Chain-of-Title

(All deeds are located at the Land Records Office, St. Mary's County Courthouse, Leonardtown, Maryland unless otherwise noted.)

Reference: Liber EWA 980, Folio 244

Grantee: Mary Theresa Sterling and Joseph Ernest Bell II and St. Aloysius R.C. Church

Grantor: John M. Sterling Date: August 17, 1993

Notes: The deed notes that the tract contains 1.3 acres and contains a two story frame house.

Reference: Liber EWA 980, Folio 241

Grantee: John M. Sterling (son of John B. and Nell L. Sterling)

Grantor: John M. Sterling (personal representative of Nell L. Sterling)

Date: August 17, 1993

Notes: Nell L. Sterling died on July 8, 1992 intestate so John M. Sterling was appointed personal

representative.

Reference: Liber EWA 980, Folio 2

Grantee: Nell L. Sterling

Grantor: John M. Sterling acting on behalf of Nell L. Sterling

Date: August 17, 1993

Notes: In 1964 Ruth Sterling died. She was survived by 12 children and 5 grandchildren. The property was then conveyed to Nell L. Sterling by John M. Sterling who acted on her behalf as the personal representative of the estate of John B. Sterling.

Reference: Liber EBA 9, Folio 188

Grantee: Lynwood J. and Ruth E. Sterling Grantor: J. Parran Crane and Mollie D. Crane

Date: January 27, 1911

Reference: Liber JFF 12, Folio 436 Grantee: J. Parran and Mollie D. Crane Grantor: Thomas and Margaret E. Boyd

Date: March 26, 1891

Notes: The property is purchased from the Boyds for \$2000.

Reference: Liber JFF 9, Folio 377 Grantee: Margaret Ellen Boyd

Grantor: J. Frank Ford and Ida C. Ford, Robert C. Combs and Ruth E. Combs, and Frances P.

Ford -- heirs of Ellen M. Ford and Robert Ford

Date: December 15, 1885

Notes: Margaret Ellen Boyd purchased the property for \$1000. The deed also notes that Ellen M. (Baltzell) Ford received the property from her father John Baltzell of Frederick City, Maryland. His will, made on November 20, 1850, advanced \$2500 to his daughter to purchase a house and lot in Leonardtown. When he died in 1854 the property reverted to Ellen.

SM-343, Ford/Sterling House St. Mary's County 8.2 Significance

Reference: Liber WTM 1, Folio 351

Grantee: John Baltzell Grantor: Ann Carpenter Date: January 4, 1848

Notes: The deed notes that the lot was occupied by Robert Ford. It notes that Ann Carpenter purchased the property from Richard Forrest, Joseph Forrest, Nicolaus Turck and Elizabeth A. Turck. While containing 1 3/4 acres, the lot did not include the portion of the lot on which the Methodist Church now stands. The property line is noted as being 10 feet from said wall of the church.

Reference: Liber JH 13, Folio 402

Grantee: Ann Carpenter

Grantor: Richard Forrest, Joseph Forrest, Nicolaus Turck and Elizabeth A. Turck (heirs of James

Forrest Date: 1844

Notes: The deed notes that the property contains two acres.

SM-343, Ford/Sterling House St. Mary's County 8.3 Significance

Soon after they purchased the house, the Sterling's constructed a significant addition to the house. Because of their growing family, 12 children in all, the Sterling's built a Queen-Anne style turret as well as a rear kitchen ell on the north side of the dwelling. According to oral tradition, the addition was styled after the Sterling's old home on the Eastern Shore. The three sided, two story, turret featured a steep four sided roof covered with pressed-tin shingles. This design also has predecessors in Leonardtown such as the W.W. Sawyer House (SM-365). The house remains under the Sterling family ownership.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

HISTORIC				
AND/OR COMMON				
Sterling House	Э			*
LOCATION				
STREET & NUMBER 218 Washingtor	n Street (old number	ing system)		
city, town Leonardtown			CONGRESSIONAL DISTR	RICT
STATE		VICINITY OF	COUNTY	
Maryland	THE CALL		St. Mary's	
CLASSIFICA	TION			
CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PREC	ENT USE
	PUBLIC	X_OCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM
STRUCTURE	X PRIVATE	UNOCCUPIED	COMMERCIAL	PARK
SITE	BOTH PUBLIC ACQUISITION	_WORK IN PROGRESS	EDUCATIONAL	X PRIVATE RESIDEN
OBJECT	_IN PROCESS	ACCESSIBLE	ENTERTAINMENT	RELIGIOUS
	BEING CONSIDERED	YES RESTRICTED	GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
•		YES: UNRESTRICTED	INDUSTRIAL MILITARY	TRANSPORTATIO
OWNER OF I				
NAME Ruth Sterling STREET & NUMBER 218 Washington			Telephone #:	
NAME Ruth Sterling STREET & NUMBER	Street	Wichuty of		ip code
NAME Ruth Sterling STREET & NUMBER 218 Washington CITY TOWN Leonardtown	Street	VICINITY OF		ip code
Ruth Sterling STREET & NUMBER 218 Washington CITY TOWN Leonardtown LOCATION (Street			ip code
Ruth Sterling STREET & NUMBER 218 Washington CITY. TOWN LEONARD COUNTHOUSE. REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.	Street	IPTION	Maryland 20650' Z	ip code
NAME Ruth Sterling STREET & NUMBER 218 Washington CITY. TOWN Leonardtown LOCATION (COURTHOUSE.	Street OF LEGAL DESCR	IPTION	Maryland 20650' Z	ip code
Ruth Sterling STREET & NUMBER 218 Washington CITY. TOWN LEONARD COUNTHOUSE. REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.	Street OF LEGAL DESCR St. Mary's County	IPTION	Maryland 20650' Z. Liber #: Folio #:	ip code
NAME Ruth Sterling STREET & NUMBER 218 Washington CITY. TOWN Leonardtown LOCATION (COURTHOUSE. REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. STREET & NUMBER CITY. TOWN	Street DF LEGAL DESCR St. Mary's County Courthouse Square Leonardtown	IPTION Courthouse	Maryland 20650' Z. Liber #: Folio #:	ip code
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CONDITION

CHECK ONE

CHECK ONE

__MOVED

__EXCELLENT

__DETERIORATED

__UNALTERED

X ORIGINAL SITE

DATE___

__FAIR

__RUINS
__UNEXPOSED

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Sterling House is a two-story frame house of the late 19th century located on the east side of Washington St. facing west toward the intersection of Shadrick Street. The main facade on Washington St. is 4 bays wide the northernmost bay projects in a polygonal tower through both floors, ending in a conical turret with a stamped metal roof and a knob finial. The main roof is low pitched with a metal standing seam surface. The exterior is covered in askestos shingles. A 1-story flat roofed porch covers the remaining three bays of the west facade and curves around onto the south elevation. It has vernacular Tuscan square columns. The foundation is brick and there is a central brick chimney. The fenestration is varied, including several modern alterations and aluminum sash and green louvred shutters at some windows.

Several frame outbuildings behind the house may vary in construction date from contemporary with the house to modern

SPECIFIC DAT	ES	BUILDER/ARCH	HITECT	
1900-	COMMUNICATIONS	INDUSTRYINVENTION	POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	OTHER (SPECIFY)
¥1800-1899	COMMERCE	EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	PHILOSOPHY	TRANSPORTATION
1700-1799	ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	THEATER
1600-1699	X_ARCHITECTURE	EDUCATION	MILITARY	_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1500-1599	AGRICULTURE	ECONOMICS	LITERATURE	SCULPTURE
1400-1499	ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	CONSERVATION	LAW	SCIENCE
PREHISTORIC	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	RELIGION
PERIOD	AF	REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH	IECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Sterling House is a fairly intact example of late-19th century small town residential architecture. The prominent corner turnet so often found in Queen Anne and other styles of the period is here tacked on to a basic traditional floor plan. Undoubtedly this was an attempt by the builder to emphasize the house's position on the main street of Leonardtown, but the siting of the house back from the street and the subsequent tree growth around it have now blunted the impact of this feature. Nevertheless, it indicates a feeling for urban location by the builder, in spite of Leonardtown's small size.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET	IF NECESSARY
10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA	
ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY	
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION	
LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR	PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES
LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTES FOR	THO ENTIES OVEREAL ING STATE SIT SOCKET BOOKS MILES
STATE	COUNTY
STATE	COUNTY
11 FORM PREPARED BY	
NAME / TITLE	
Janet Davis	
ORGANIZATION	DATE
MHT/SHA Surveyor	September 26, 1930
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE (301) 269-2438
21 State Circle	(301) 269-2438
CITY OR TOWN	STATE 21401
Annacolis	Maryland 21401

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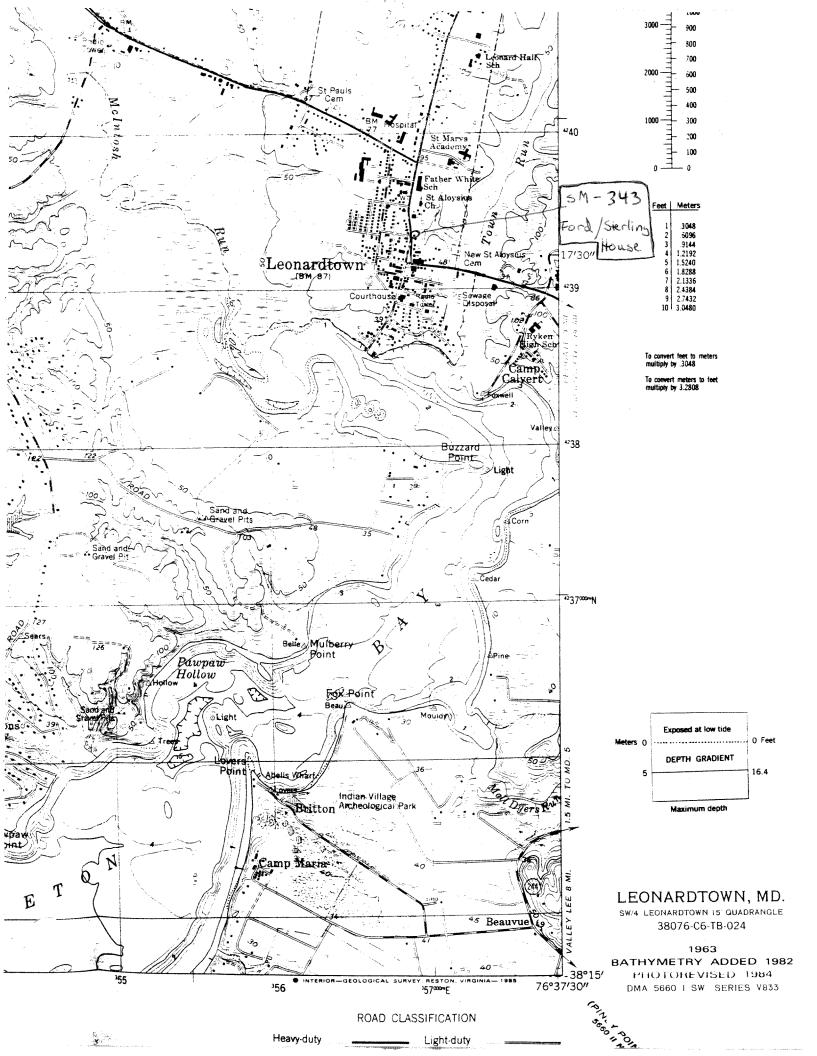
RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust

The Shaw House, 21 State Circle

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

(301) 267-1438







5M-311 3 Ford Steeling House It. May's County of 497 MA 544 Wa . . . to stone 14



5M 343 Shelly your St Month Count Kirk turnite M) INFO The from pools - story = 2 0/4



SM-313 sterling towas t. Mary's County Kirk Parcette Ma 1977 to 1 to the = 84



SM 318 Hering Homes t. May's (Kirk Fanterton 1. 1997 Md SHFO I terror = looking N 4 of 4

